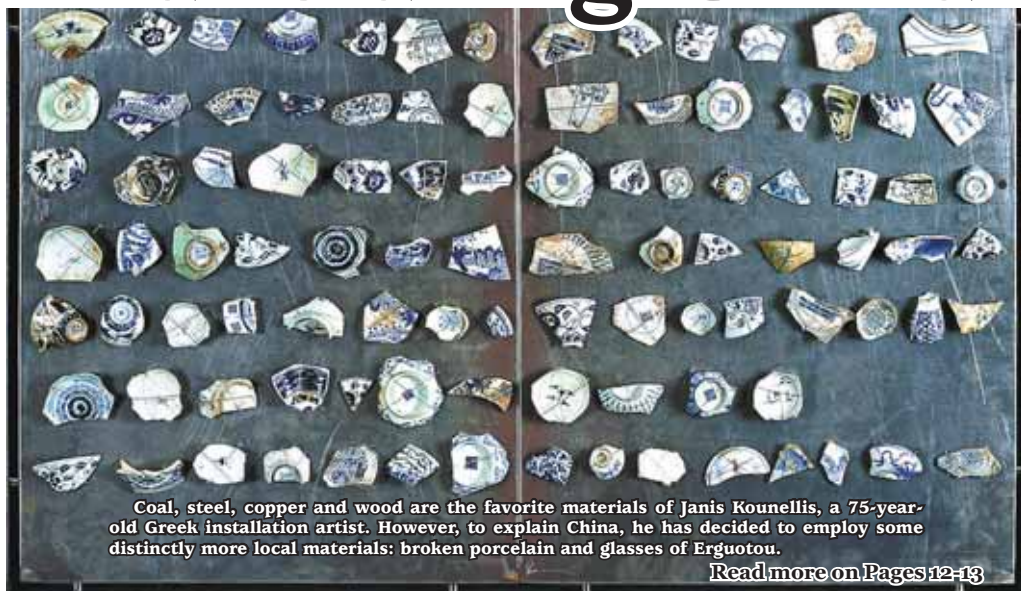


**X-mas shopping  
at home**

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## Translating China



Coal, steel, copper and wood are the favorite materials of Janis Kounellis, a 75-year-old Greek installation artist. However, to explain China, he has decided to employ some distinctly more local materials: broken porcelain and glasses of Erguotou.

Read more on Pages 12-13



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### Thai filmmaker in BJ

Thai director Apichatpong is hosting his first solo exhibition in China at the Ullens Center for Contemporary Art.

But be warned! His photos, films and rare shorts may be difficult to get your head around.



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### 'Moon Door' dreamer

While preparing for the 2008 Olympics, the city of Beijing sought to hide its "ugly" side behind moon doors.

Fascinated by the juxtaposition, French artist San Bartolomeis began collecting scenes of the hidden city. His photos will debut next week.

### Pirate minds blamed for slow app sales

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### Maotai hopes for luxury recognition

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### Singer rises to fame on the Internet

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# State to ban ads during TV dramas next year

By Han Manman

Couch potatoes will soon be able to watch their favorite TV dramas without advertisements.

The State Administration of Radio, Film, and Television (SARFT) on Monday issued new rules to prohibit commercials from interrupting TV dramas, only allowing them to air back-to-back between programs.

It said the new restrictions, which take effect on January 1, are intended to spur broadcasters to show more cultural programming and push them to uphold a "public service."

The ban is among SARFT's latest efforts to regulate the

country's rampant TV commercials, following a ban on sex-related commercials on radio and TV that took effect in October. The administration also said commercial advertisements should not be aired under the guise of news report or in the form of a news interview.

Reaction was mixed among viewers and advertising professionals.

A microblog survey conducted by Sina.com shows the majority of viewers support the ban. About 85 percent of nearly 10,000 respondents said TV commercials were annoying.

Some advocates also complained that there are so many

commercials that TV dramas have become fragmented and difficult to follow.

But some also question whether local TV stations will abide by the ban, as it will allegedly cause revenue losses of 20 billion yuan per year.

Experts say pushing commercials to the end of dramas will ultimately hurt marketers and make TV stations struggle to stay in business.

A spokeswoman for Hunan Satellite TV who refused to be named said the new regulation came after most advertising deals for the next year had already been signed.

"TV stations executives around the country have

many sleepless nights ahead," she said.

Earlier this month, both foreign and domestic companies paid a record 14.26 billion yuan, or about \$2.25 billion, for the rights to advertise next year on the country's largest network, China Central Television. Volkswagen AG, for example, pledged \$45.6 million (290 million yuan) at the auction, according to Chinese advertising agency Charm Communications.

"If ad revenue drops, then stations must cut their budgets for purchasing good, new programs," said Ivy Zhong, CEO of TV production company Beijing Gallop-

ing Horse.

"The competition will be good for companies that know how to produce good dramas. Stations will simply have to make smarter choices," Zhong said.

China isn't alone in its quest against ads. In 2008, French president Nicolas Sarkozy proposed a similar initiative to ban ads on public network France Télévisions, following the lead of the UK's British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC).

But in 2010, Sarkozy, facing resistance from businesses, dropped the effort.

South Korea runs its TV dramas free of ads on Korean broadcast stations.

## Grandparents excited by looser family planning rules, parents remain ambivalent

Since the 1980s, Chinese grandparents have grudgingly accepted the facts of having only one grandchild.

But the loosening of family planning policies have many hoping to expand their family trees.

Of course, the current generation of parents – born during the "single-child" era – aren't necessarily eager to get on board.

Li Kuan has a four-year-old son, and now he and his wife are planning to have another baby: not because they want it, but because his parents demanded it.

"We have to obey my parents as they want so much to have one more grandchild," said Li, who lives in Harbin, Heilongjiang Province.

The couple was born during the 1980s when family planning policies limited each couple to have only one child. The program was an attempt to stem the nation's population explosion.

But that policy started older generations that had grown up in a culture that equated more offspring with more bliss.

Hope emerged around 2000, when local governments began to allow an additional child for parents who both came from single-child families.

Today, all 31 provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities on the Chinese mainland have adopted similar policies. The last

province to do so was also the most populous, Henan, which announced Friday it will allow parents from single-child families to have another child.

Grandparents have celebrated the news, but the reaction of some young parents has been tepid.

According to a survey in August by the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences and the Women's Federation of Shanghai Municipality, 45 percent of Shanghai families have decided not to have a second child because of the significant costs.

Nearly 10 percent of the respondents spent over half of their family income on children, according to the survey.

Dong Hongyang, a researcher with Heilongjiang Provincial Academy of Social Sciences, said young couples who are single children themselves are more self-centered and don't like to be overburdened with parenting.

"They tend to find themselves under greater pressure than their parents used to be as they try to provide a high-quality life and education to their own children."

Yet grandparents who want more grandchildren would take all the bother and burden as long as their sons and daughters agree to give them one more grandchild.

A mother surnamed Meng in Xiamen, Fujian Province has a three-year-old daughter. She and her husband



Many families have decided not to have a second child because of the significant costs, even as the country's family planning policy loosens.

CFP Photo

don't meet the qualifications for having another child, as only one of them comes from a single-child family.

Her mother-in-law, however, is asking them to have one more, in the hopes of getting a grandson. Traditionally in China, boys are favored over girls, and this sentiment remains strong in Fujian and other southeastern coastal areas.

But Meng refuses to have another child and prays the government won't extend the loosened policy to them, as it provides a good excuse to reject her mother-in-law.

"I hope that the one-child

policy stays in effect forever," Meng said.

Of course, there are young parents who would gladly accept whatever burden another child might bring. Li Wei, a 31-year-old full-time mother in Harbin, is among them.

She was spent all her seven married years raising her two children, a six-year-old girl and a three-month-old boy, but she said it is worth it.

"Growing up as an only child, as my husband and I did, is too lonely," Li said.

"Also, one more child means my husband and I, along with our four parents,

will have more care from our children when we're old. You know, six elderly family members is too much for one child to bear," she said.

The government's family planning policies have prevented 400 million births from being added to the Chinese mainland's population, which currently stands at more than 1.34 billion, according to government statistics.

However, there have been heated debates over the policies' side effects that have emerged over the past decades, such as an aging society and a coming labor shortage – not to mention the notable gender imbalance. The loosened policy on parents both from single-child families is a response to those concerns.

There also has been a call for families with one parent from a single-child family, like that of Meng in Xiamen, to be permitted to have a second child.

The government, for its part, has not hinted at further relaxation. The country's population control authority reiterated last month that China would adhere to the current policy.

Li Bin, director of the State Population and Family Planning Commission, said overpopulation remains one of the major challenges for China's social and economic development.

(Xinhua)



# Charities' questionable collections tarnish image

By Zhao Hongyi

China Central Television (CCTV) reported this week that the World Eminent Chinese Business Association (WECBA), which has worked with the China Youth Development Foundation on charitable projects, may be more business than charity.

The association claimed to have collected 1.5 billion yuan to build 1,000 Hope schools in Africa. Hope Project is a charity program that collects donations to build schools in China's less developed western interior.

But Lu Xingyu, a 24 year-old secretary who works for the association, said that may be a cover.

On her microblog, Lu wrote that WECBA invites Chinese entrepreneurs to become members, promising access to government, business and financial connections.

But all WECBA conferences, seminars and forums are organized by Tianjiu Rushang Investing Company, owned by Li Hailing, the wife of association president Lu Junqing, Lu Xingyu's father.

The company collects high memberships, registration and conference fees. In 2010, the association started its "new project" to perform charitable works in Africa.

Sun Yidong, president of a real estate company in Shandong Province, received a call last July inviting him to join the association. Sun



The audience cheers on Chen Guangbiao, the billionaire-philanthropist and head of Jiangsu Huangpu Recycling Resources at a concert the tycoon organized in Guizhou Province.

CFP Photo

agreed, and began paying the 3,900-yuan yearly membership fee.

Within a week, Sun was invited to take part in a conference held by the association in the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, the permanent venue of the National People's Congress. Admission was 5,800 yuan.

After he arrived in Beijing, Sun was further persuaded to take part in the VIP roundtable, which cost 50,000 yuan. Afterward, the association told him they could arrange for WECBA president Lu to be his consultant for 1 million yuan every three years.

CCTV reporters contacted

the Ministry of Civil Affairs, the government's watchdog responsible for overseeing charitable groups, for information about WECBA.

The ministry said the association has never registered officially, either as an organization or project.

Lu Junqing said the main business of his association is to hold conferences, but he insisted that his charity is developing in "a right and legal way."

"This sector is a newly prospering industry in China, and it's hard to say whether these alleged actions are actually illegal," he said in the interview with CCTV reporters.

"Social organizations should be non-profits," said Yang Yue, deputy director of social organization management under the Ministry of Civil Affairs.

"Many organizations are registered in Hong Kong," he said. "Our laws and rules on the mainland have no legal authority over them."

In June this year, a 20-year-old woman named Guo Meimei who claimed she was the business vice president of China Red Cross angered netizens by bragging and posting photos of her expensive lifestyle. A media investigation revealed that her honored father cooperated with the Red Cross and collected

donations for the charity.

These scandals shook the nation's confidence in charities, and many are appealing to the government to push through new laws to require transparency.

Statistics from the Ministry of Civil Affairs found charitable donations fell 50-80 percent in the second half of this year.

On November 28, *Forbes* released its list of "The Most Transparent Charities in China," saying private foundations are outperforming their public peers. Their list was based on the ability of the charities to collect money, organize programs and complete projects.

The Cherished Dream Foundation, a charity supporting junior education in Shanghai, ranked first in transparency, followed by China Social Entrepreneur Foundation and China Red Cross.

"It's a good start," said Deng Guosheng, director of the Creation and Social Responsibility Research Center at Tsinghua University.

But Deng said the list was based on the information released by the foundations themselves, which may not be reliable.

The Ministry of Civil Affairs is drafting new regulations that would require charities to make public their collection and expense records. Deng said the regulations are expected to be passed into law in 2012.

# Tennis school closes despite interest

By Zhao Hongyi

China Tennis School was once the capital's most popular tennis training center: as of this fall, it is gone.

The school, formerly located some 23 kilometers south of the Yuquanying Bridge on South Third Ring Road, was created in 1999 when the General Administration of Sport was promoting tennis together with the Ministry of Education and the Beijing Municipal Commission of Education.

The founders expected the school to become the cradle of Chinese tennis stars. It recruited hundreds of students from around the country to receive professional training and education.

At the time, tennis was unpopular. Graduates from sports universities were glad to

be recruited and employed by the school.

By 2006, the school had a number of excellent graduates competing around the country like Bo Yan and Yang Zijun. The school granted national certificates to 133 tennis graduates, and helped trigger a wave of tennis fever.

Many provinces set up similar schools and participated in the national tennis tournament. Zhu Benqiang, Zhang Yu, Wang Que and Bo Yan were the winners of the tennis tournaments in those years.

The school was also the place to promote tennis to teenagers and the masses. Michael Chang, the Grand Slam winning Chinese American tennis player, came to the school several times to coach amateur and teen players. The school

offered many tennis lessons to fans as well.

It was also the training base of national tennis stars.

Li Na, the new French Open champion, and her colleagues of the national tennis team including Zheng Jie, Yan Zi, Sun Tiantian and Li Ting spent most of their training hours there.

But after the new tennis training centers opened in other provinces, especially those in Taizhou, Zhejiang Province and Jiangmen, Guangdong Province, the school began a slow and steady decline.

"Those new training centers have better facilities and services," said Jia Jingzhe, general manager of CTA (China Tennis Association) Tennis Promotion, the official organizer of

the China Open.

Tennis has long been considered a luxury sport, said Zhou Xuhang, a tennis reporter for *Sports Weekly*.

"It requires larger venues for training, unlike ping pong. Space makes it seem like a luxury, and that explains why China doesn't have many tennis fans or players," Zhou said.

The average annual cost for a student living and training at the school is around 200,000 yuan. This does not include the cost of travel or competition.

"This is not expensive compared with the costs in the other countries, which can be millions of yuan," Jia said.

But it is still not affordable for an ordinary Chinese family, especially when the child is starting early and future success remains unclear.

The reform of China's national tennis team management after the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games was the other factor that led to the school's decline, Zhou said. The national tennis team allows athletes to train alone.

"Most of the athletes prefer the better and cheaper training centers in other provinces and invite foreign coaches who have more experience," Zhou said.

In foreign countries, tennis associations and organizations avoid using the term "tennis school" to label their training bases.

"It takes a lot of years before a training base is worthy of such a label," he said. "That a national tennis school is dying is a sign that our attempts to promote this sport in China have not been successful."

# Piracy 101

Culture, convenience depress paid app sales

By Huang Daohen

If you have an iPhone and are looking for a way to be cool or bad, then jailbreaking may be for you.

Escaping from Apple's walled garden can be a very tempting idea: you can find tons of apps for free and access to the root of the file system to get total control of your phone.

That may well explain why China, where few are willing to pay for software, lags behind in the paid App Store market – even after the country overtook the US as the world's largest smartphone market.

With so many jailbroken devices, how are software developers planning to profit?

## Mad iPhone users

Everyone loves the iPhone, but using one isn't necessarily a joy – especially since making a call with one can sometimes require leaning out a window to get a good signal.

Vincent Chen, a 28-year-old office worker and an Apple fan, became disgruntled with the iPhone 4 handset he purchased last October.

Dropped calls aside, the spotty signal coverage and poor customer service made him very unsatisfied.

These problems may sound all too familiar to iPhone users in the US, where the notorious telecom network AT&T controls the majority of phones.

In China, iPhone control falls to China Unicom – the only national mobile service offering a 3G network that is compatible with the iPhone.

While Unicom profited by working with Apple to sell the iPhone in China, the company did little to improve the quality of its network.

"Everyone hates it," Chen said.

But that troublesome experience didn't weaken Apple fans' loyalty.

When Apple unveiled its latest phone in early October, Chen decided to give up his Unicom iPhone.

Chen bought an iPhone 4S during his business trip to Hong Kong last month and got a service contract with China Mobile, another telecom provider known for its stronger and stable signal.

He spent 4,200 yuan for the phone and 300 yuan for the SIM card, which he had to file down to fit into the iPhone.

But the stable signal didn't come without a price: Chen had to settle for China Mobile's slower 2.5G network. The iPhone is not compatible with its 3D TD-LTE network.

The slower data speeds mean that apps which transfer a lot of data run poorly. Online videos are especially choppy.

"But at least I don't miss any important calls," Chen said.

Chen is not alone in making sacrifices for the latest Apple gadgets.

In June, a teenage girl known only as Wen posted on Sina Weibo that she would trade her virginity for an iPhone 4. She posted a photo of herself and wrote that she dreamed of getting an iPhone 4, but her father forbid it.

The post was later confirmed to be a fake, but it wasn't the first case of Chinese youth turning to extreme means to acquire Apple gadgets.

Earlier the same month, a high school student surnamed Zheng in Guangdong Province reportedly sold one of his kidneys for 20,000 yuan to purchase an iPad 2 tablet.

## To jailbreak or not

But acquiring one of Apple's slick devices is only the beginning of a user's trouble.

Many debate whether to jailbreak their device or not.

Chen's previous Unicom iPhone 4 ran a jailbroken version of Apple's iOS 4.3.3. Since jailbreak tools aren't available for iOS 5.0.1, Chen has to wait.

"There are so many temptations in favor of a jailbreak," Chen said. "You can get tons of free apps for your phone. Even if you don't need them all, the variety is usually better."

Jailbreaking also grants



An iPhone displays the cost of an app in yuan.

access to the root of the file system – something important to smartphone enthusiasts like Chen. "Only after you have access to the file system do you have absolute control of your phone," he said.

Most Chinese iPhone users share Chen's view, and are willing to sacrifice the safety, stability and convenience of Apple's walled garden.

According to a report by UMeng, a Beijing-based market research firm gathering statistics for mobile developers, one in every three iPhones on the mainland is jailbroken.

Among Apple gadgets, the iPhone 4 is the most popular iOS device, accounting for 54 percent of the market, the report said.

Chinese users are relatively less interested in jailbreaking the iPad, and only 27 percent of iPads are jailbroken.

Chi Fan, an analyst with UMeng, said the number of jailbroken iOS devices does not directly translate to software piracy patterns.

"A good number of iPhones and iPads in the country were bought from the gray market, where devices are jailbroken prior to sale," he said.

Chi said the complicated US dollar payment system

used by the App Store has also scared away Chinese customers.

Some users prefer to buy pre-paid iTunes cards on the e-commerce site Taobao. Chin said some jailbroken iPhones remain in the hands of potential paid-users.

## A bet on China

Apple, of course, knows that well.

China has become the company's fastest-growing region, with revenue of \$4.5 billion (28.6 billion yuan) in the fourth quarter.

On November 18, the company's online shop, the App Store, started accepting payments made in Chinese yuan.

"It's really good news for customers and local application developers," a spokeswoman at Apple China was quoted by China Daily as saying.

The online store now accepts yuan credit and debit cards issued by more than 20 banks.

The Chinese mainland market has become the second largest market after the US in terms of software downloads, according to statistics from Bloomberg News.

The report said the download volume of iPhone apps in Asian countries has seen sig-

nificant growth in the past six months while sales in Europe and the Americas have fallen.

However, the surge didn't translate into profits, as most downloads in China are free.

The free version of *The Bad Apples* had more than 530,000 downloads in China, while the paid version had only 470.

Chi said Apple's recent payment adjustment might encourage Chinese customers to buy paid apps at the App Store, but it won't provide a large revenue boost for the company.

"Most customers are used to downloading pirated applications for free," he said. "They do not want to spend money in the first place, and won't change that simply because you allow them to pay in yuan."

Is China still a market worth betting on, then?

Chi said it is all about cultural differences.

"In China, things you get from your Internet connection are expected to be free," Chi said. "If it's not free in one place, it will be free somewhere else. Users know they just have to keep searching."

Chi said China is also more sensitive to prices. "If you want to sell something, you better make sure it is the cheapest thing on the market. A price difference of even half a yuan can mean a harder sell," he said.

However, China has been the world's largest smartphone market since the third quarter of 2011. Chi said China is certain to become a major market for smartphone software developers.

"It will just take a lot of time, patience and familiarity with the local market," he said.

Poor iPhone service has done little to reduce Apple's popularity.  
IC Photos



# Emigration dilemma

New immigration policies adopted by the governments of the UK, Spain, France and Romania are likely to affect Chinese nationals.

While announcing the new policies on immigration, UK Prime Minister David Cameron said that permanent residency tests will be reformed and there will be a clampdown on the use of fake marriages to obtain residency.

A new list of short-term jobs was also made public by the British government. Reportedly, working as a cook is the area in which most prospective Chinese workers are interested. Yet it has become harder for a Chinese national to work as a cook in the UK, with conditions including working 37-and-a-half hours a week for a minimum salary of £28,000 (\$43,900) per year, in addition to needing at least five years of experience.

These new rules forbid takeaway restaurants and Chinese restaurants in the UK from hiring cooks from abroad, causing some Chinese restaurants to close down because they cannot hire any appropriate candidates within their budget.

Statistics show that by the end of 2010 there were 156,800 Chinese nationals who had legally immigrated to Spain. From 2009, immigrants from China started to flow to countries in North Africa and South America.

New regulations adopted by the French government in May also called for expulsions of illegal immigrants to be stepped up.

However, the US has recently approved legislation that would make it easier for China to win employment-related visas, allowing their citizens to work in the country.



More wealthy Chinese are considering moving abroad due to concerns over better education.  
An Xin/CFP Photo

## The third eye Why are wealthy Chinese looking to emigrate?

The country's economic boom has created a large number of millionaires. This new-found wealth considers moving abroad an option, as their wealth has made it easier to obtain citizenship and permanent resident status in other countries.

According to a new survey conducted by Hurun Research Institute, among the country's 60,000 super-rich – those with assets of at least 100 million yuan – nearly half are considering emigrating, for the sake of better education, better living conditions or better investment opportunities.

As many as 14 percent have already emigrated or are in the process of emigrating.

The first step usually involves buying property in the desired destination.

Xu Guangjian, a professor at Renmin University of China, calls this a phenomenon of social progress, along with rising economic capacity. "Wealthy Chinese emigrating to other countries is normal now, but you could not have imagined that 30 years ago," Xu said.

Xu said a number of wealthy Chinese chose to put their busi-

ness emphasis on China, because doing business overseas may not guarantee success. China would give them more opportunities to do business."

Taxation is another consideration for rich Chinese to not completely move all their assets or business out, and some may not even apply for resident status.

Of the Chinese millionaires polled by Hurun Research Institute, most named the US as the most popular destination for them to set up a second home, Canada and Singapore followed. (Agencies)

# Crash landing

## Is business performance returning to 2008 levels?

In economic terms, the "lost decade" refers to Japan's economic stagnation throughout the 1990s after its strong growth in the 1980s.

Against the backdrop of a shaky global recovery, concerns have recently grown over a possible hard landing for the Chinese economy, caused by monetary tightening intended to control inflation.

Some scholars have predicted that the country's business conditions are back to 2008 levels, at the time the world was facing financial crisis. Could China be heading for its own "lost decade"?



The value of the country's A-share market shrank 903.2 billion yuan (\$139.6 billion) in the first half of this year.

IC Photo

### Slow pace

New data adds to the evidence that the Chinese economy is slowing.

GDP growth cooled to 9.5 percent year-on-year in the second quarter of 2011, slightly down from the previous quarter's 9.7 percent, and 9.8 percent in the fourth quarter of 2011, according to data from the National Bureau of Statistics.

"China's economy is investment-driven. Total supply exceeds total demand," said Wang Xiaoguang, a research fellow at the Policy Advisory Department of the Chinese Academy of Governance.

China's retail sales grew by 14.8 percent in 2010, down from 16.9 percent in 2009. The growth decreased to 10.8 percent during the January-June period this year. Also, the growth of exports dropped below 20 percent for two consecutive months, according to NBS. "The continued moderation [in growth] is mainly caused by the insufficient demand from exports to domestic consumption," he noted.

The Consumer Price Index (CPI), a key gauge of inflation, rose by 6.2 percent year-on-year in August, cooling from a three-year high of 6.5 percent in July, NBS stated in early September. This reversed a 37-month high and, according to Fan Gang, a former senior adviser to the People's Bank of China, the central bank, indicated a soft landing for the economy.

"While the global economy is troubled by debt crises and speculation concerning a double-dip recession, the central bank's decision to raise interest rates makes it clear that taming inflation remains a top priority, even as the pace of economic growth gently eases," Fan said.

Fan released a report on the competitiveness of Chinese enterprises on November 22, which shows that conditions worsened for more than 6,000 companies in seven main industries last year.

With the exception of technology services and social environments that were better off than in 2008, enterprises assigned lower scores to the areas of human resources, financial services, the legal environment, executive administration and infrastructure.

It is worth noting that small and medium businesses accounted for 49 percent and 41 percent, respectively, of the companies surveyed in the report.

### Less gov't intervention

Fan said that reducing government intervention and improving relations between the government, the market and the business community were key to the country's economic reforms.

Fan's views were echoed by Li Yang, vice president of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, and Liu Shijin, deputy director of the State Council's Development Research Center, who called for the government to end its monopolies and develop the country's capital market to provide loans to small businesses.

Overall business conditions improved between 2006-2008, but have worsened since the global financial crisis occurred in late 2008, Fan said.

Fan said the government must relax its policies, reduce intervention and open markets dominated by State-run players to the private sector, if it wishes to strengthen the competitive edge of companies.

The sooner China's private sector is given an opportunity to develop, the more competitive Chinese enterprises will be, he said.

### Restructuring ahead

Referring to whether China's economic problems would lead to a "lost decade," analysts including Fan said that may be pessimistic. But a must-do task for the government is to push ahead its economic restructuring to avoid a hard landing.

After decades of export-driven growth, it is hard to imagine that continued reliance on external demand will work for China in the next few years, as China's trade-to-GDP ratio and exports-to-GDP ratio already respectively exceeded 60 percent and 30 percent, said Yu Yongding of the China Society of World Economics.

Yu, also a former member of the Monetary Policy Committee of the PBOC, said that "China has reached a crucial juncture: without painful structural adjustments, the momentum of its economic growth could suddenly be lost."

The good news is that China has become less reliant on export growth, as the trade surplus narrowed by 8.7 percent year-on-year to \$76.2 billion in the first seven months, according to customs data.

The rapid decline in the export order index may signal a downturn in exports during the coming months, due to a predicted lower demand from the eurozone and the US as they battle with potential debt crises.

However, some see opportunities in the crises.

China should take the opportunity to transform its development mode from one orientated toward export demand to one led by domestic demand, said Harvard University Professor Dale Jorgenson, adding that the US debt crisis will further depress demand for Chinese exports.

"The financial crisis has taught us that what happens in one nation has impacts on regions and others further afield," said economist Jeremy Stevens from Standard Bank in South Africa.

"As the world's largest exporter and second largest importer, China is certainly more externalized than ever before. Hence, global macroeconomic weakness will inevitably erode and undermine organic economic activity in the country," he told ChinAfrica.

(Agencies)

### Brief

## Yao Ming launches family wine company

Basketball star Yao Ming has not faded from the spotlight since retiring from the Houston Rockets.

He has recently returned as head of a new wine company, with its first vintage to debut at a fundraising dinner for the 2011 Special Olympics.

The event's organizer said Yao will introduce his wine company Yao Ming Family Wine to the public at the party. The winery, located in California's Napa Valley, will begin selling 2009 Cabernet Sauvignon next week.

The first batch of wine will have a limited run of only 1,200 bottles, which will sell for 3,800 yuan (\$600) each. A bottle of the wine is to be auctioned at the fundraising campaign for a starting price of 60,000 yuan (\$9,400). The Shanghai Special-Care Foundation will use the funds to promote the Special Olympics in China.

Yao Ming's wine will appear at the party along with six other items, including a painting of Special Olympic athlete Lu Jing, an outfit custom-made for Yao by iShark, as well as Yao's shoes and leather goods, a diamond necklace made for the Special Olympics and a cell phone made for the late "King of Pop" Michael Jackson.

## 7-Eleven chooses franchising for expansion

Convenience store chain 7-Eleven plans to launch a franchising business in Shanghai next year to accelerate expansion amid competition.

The chain entered the Shanghai market in 2009 and aimed to open 300 outlets within five years. The chain now operates 100 stores in Shanghai, and the franchising business will allow it develop rapidly to reach its target, said Huang Qianli, general manager of the China division at Taiwan's President Chain Store Corp, the operator of 7-Eleven.

Huang declined to specify the franchising conditions to run 7-Eleven stores, but said two stores are already operating in Shanghai on a trial franchised basis.

"We'd like to share both profits and risks with our franchisees," he told reporters.

As a late entrant, 7-Eleven has its work cut out for it as it tries to catch up with Taiwan-based FamilyMart and other local chains such as Alldays in Shanghai, where the market is very competitive as stores face higher rent and expensive labor.

"The rent in Shanghai is twice that of Taipei, making store expansion tough," said Huang.

FamilyMart said it aims to open 1,000 stores nationwide by the end of this year, including 700 in Shanghai.

The 7-Eleven chain uses franchising as a major strategy in Taiwan, where 85 percent of its 4,800 stores are opened by investors. It has 1,700 stores on the Chinese mainland.

(Agencies)



# Is Maotai a luxury brand?



A bottle of Five Star Maotai bottled in 1955 was listed for half a million yuan at auction.

Hu Guolin/IC Photo

By Zhao Hongyi

This month, local Chinese reports say Chinese Maotai liquor is applying for luxury certification from the World Luxury Association (WLA), which provoked anger and complaints from fans and consumers of the No.1 Chinese liquor.

"Luxury goods are the natural result of long-term market performance rather than a certification," Sun Yimin, vice professor of social sciences from Fudan University said when interviewed.

"Historical performance, brand, quality and price play a role in defining a commodity as a luxury good," he said. The vice professor believes a luxury is labeled by consumers, not the producers themselves.

Maotai is produced in Guizhou, a province famous for its environment. The liquor has a history of more than 500 years.

Since 1915, when it took its first gold medal in the Panama Pacific International Exposition, the liquor has won 15 world medals.

Previously, Maotai was produced in limited amounts for national senior officials in Beijing before. Since it was publicly listed on the Chinese stock market in 2001 production started to increase, affording wider society a taste.

From this time, the price of Maotai liquor started rising, from the previous 200-300 yuan per bottle to nearly 3,000 yuan per bottle today. One year ago, the price was less than 2,000 yuan a bottle. Senior officials say the price may rise to 5,000 yuan a bottle

in the next few years. In the auction market, a ten-year or twenty-year bottle of Maotai can sell for hundreds of thousands of yuan.

The price of 52 percent Feitian Maotai is 700-800 yuan per bottle at the factory, Ji said. The price climb to nearly 3,000 yuan is the result of market speculation, he said.

"We have never applied for luxury certification," Ji Kelian, former CEO and honorable chairman of Maotai said.

Ouyang Kun, the representative of WLA in Beijing, denied the reports as well. "We don't have the right and authority to certify a commodity as a luxury," he said.

However, Ouyang admits that the producer of Maotai has long been in contact with them. "It is quite possible that the producer expects to be listed in the World's Most Valuable Luxury 100 Brands that we are scheduled to release next year," He said.

At the same time, an organization known as the China Luxury Institute, registered in Hong Kong, listed Feitian Maotai as one of the "100 Most Valuable Chinese Luxury" brands in early November.

"The list is the result of our interview and survey of over 1,000 Chinese brands," Cai Sujian, president of the institute, said in the interview.

"The craze for luxury goods is just starting in China," said vice professor Sun Yimin. "As society develops to be more sophisticated, a luxury item will be a bottle of wine, a dinner with family or a vacation."

## Comment

### Inevitable phase of development

The desire for luxury is only a part of the development of our country. Now, people purchase luxury goods as gifts to open doors in social relations. With more sophisticated social development and the production of these high-end commodities rising, we'll have more opportunities to obtain these goods. Only in that situation can these luxury goods be in their real values.

— Wang Jun, professor of social science

### Ridiculous lists and promotions

I find it ridiculous for the associations and institutes to list and promote luxury brands. A luxury brand is the result of recognition of long history, high quality and consumers' acceptance. We have many old brands in China which have held high reputations in the past but most of them disappeared in recent years. I believe these old brands would be luxury brands if someone could recover them.

— Xue Bei, student in Nanjing

### Beyond Maotai's hope

Now I understand the situation is beyond Maotai's hope and capability. The high price of Maotai is the result of market speculation. We should have a higher and longer sight in judging luxury brands. Don't believe in the market promotion! On the other hand, it's not a bad thing for Maotai to become a luxury brand, no matter if it is their hope or not, because we'll have a closer eye on the quality of Maotai in the future.

— Han Haoqiyue, news commentator

### What is a luxury?

I fully agree with Professor Sun in the story. As you develop further, most of the luxury aura will disappear. As ordinary people, we should and will appreciate and value the daily life we have. A vacation, a bottle of ordinary wine, a dinner, and a film ticket will be a luxury in our life. Certainly, if you have the money to invest or waste, you can purchase those so-called luxury brands, to keep or as a gift. That's another choice. Calm down and take it easy.

— Michael A. Abrams, US student in Beijing

## Debate of the week

### Offer of cheap houses provokes debate

A tycoon famous for his outlandish charitable stunts is offering to sell property at huge discounts to people who have made significant contributions to the nation.

Chen Guangbiao received both cheers and jeers for his new venture, which he explained in a video clip posted on his micro blog on Saturday.

His plan is to sell real estate to people in Nanjing, Jiangsu Province, for 16 percent less than its market value, which he says is aimed at promoting the idea that property prices in China should be reduced.

However, there are conditions. In Chen's posts, which gave detailed descriptions of four properties up for grabs — two villas, an apartment and an office — he stipulated that buyers must be permanent residents of Nanjing and have contributed greatly to scientific research and development.

In addition, he plans to charge for the properties' interior decoration and furniture, and wants buyers to pay in cash.

According to Chen's conditions, the two villas will each cost at least 10 million yuan (\$1.57 million), an amount that does not include a monthly 8,000-yuan maintenance fee residents will have to pay.

Chen's proposal, which first came to light on November 22, has caused a stir among Internet users and the media.

As usual, for every person who applauded his efforts there was a critic who accused him of simply seeking publicity.

### Girl calls boyfriend 'garbage'

A recently posted video of a woman calling her boyfriend "garbage" for his lack of money has been circulating online.

The video, filmed by passengers on the train where the couple was arguing, aroused heated discussion among netizens, most of whom criticized the woman's behavior, with others saying the couple was acting.

The woman in the video continuously scolds her boyfriend, saying, "A man with no money is garbage," and "don't even think of marrying me since you don't have any money." As he was being reprimanded in public, the man kept his head down and didn't say a word in response. The man also remained silent while the woman got off the train alone.

The post has provoked fierce reactions on the web, accumulating 370,000 hits in just three days.

Netizens who watched the video expressed that they were irritated by the woman's behavior, with some calling the woman "garbage" for her rude public tantrum. Others called the man a coward for not standing up to his girlfriend. (Agencies)

# Moon door dreamers

## French artist captures urban residents' real life



Landlord and wife

By Han Manman

In 2008, the country was preparing for the Olympic Games. In Beijing, any residential dwellings considered to be eyesores needed to be concealed in a quick and convenient way. Moon doors, symbols of traditional beauty, were appropriated to solve the problem.

After spending several months taking pictures to gather the stories behind this unique period in the city, 62-year old French artist San Bartolome is planning to tell those stories in his solo exhibition, which will be held next week in Beijing.



San Bartolome

### Telling story through exhibition

In a series of photos titled "Moon Door," by San Bartolome shows scenes familiar to local people: the tobacco and liquor stores, hairdressers, adult shops, building material vendors and small restaurants. However, all of the scenes are hidden behind moon doors.

The photos captured in the Shibali District adjacent to Beijing's South Fourth Ring Road are part of Bartolome's Moon Door Dreamers, which will open in the see+ gallery in 798 Art Space from next Saturday.

For the exhibition, Bartolome has approached his art work as a theatrical director, painstakingly selecting his scenarios, mobilizing the characters of these authentic scenes, and redecorating the night scene with lights to create a stage with each moon door, so that each individual can dramatically present their version of China's modernization.

Having lived in China for many years as a cultural official from France, Bartolome said that what moves him most are the daily lives of common people, just like what he saw behind the moon doors.

Bartolome said the most important thing is not the moon-shaped doors, but the places conceal. These are places far removed from the original context of the moon door as an architectural symbol of beauty, and thus the moon door becomes a mere imitation of ornament.

### Encounter with moon doors

One day in April 2008, Bartolome set off for the warehouse of a junk merchant he knew. His car ventured off its familiar route and was caught in a traffic jam between two long grey walls pierced by round gateways, like moon doors.

"The place immediately appealed to me," Bartolome said. He went back one evening to find out more about the people he had glimpsed in the



Electricity shop owner with his family

gateways.

Unlike the traditional moon doors which open on to the ornate walls of rich houses and gardens, these openings looked on to humble shops. This was a curiously moving sight for Bartolome.

Later, he knew that the walls had just been built for the Olympics, both to protect a horde of twittering children from traffic and "beautify" the city.

Armed with a special permit from the Beijing authorities, Bartolome began to spend his weekends in Shibali District getting to know the people.

Bartolome said the people he met were all really kind to him. A young grocer named Zhao introduced Bar-

tolome to all his neighbours. He met the people who ran a noodle bar, the couple at the tobacco and sex shop across the street, as well as tinkers, launderers, hairdressers and even the owner of the neighbouring block of flats.

"I shared their evenings and meals by the roadside and they gradually made their acquaintance with me," he said.

### Two jeeps guarded

Bartolome started to take photos some months later when most of the people in the area were familiar with him.

He was ready to make his first portrait of Zhao on the threshold of his grocery shop.

"It was hellish! I had to stand in the middle of the street to frame my shots and

found myself wedged between two almost continuous streams of buses, trucks, tractors, motorbikes, cars, and overloaded tricycles and bicycles," he said, adding, "They swerved behind me or stopped between my camera and the subject that I was trying to photograph!"

Finally a sleek black limousine pulled up, escorted by a jeep. Two officials climbed out. After inspecting Bartolome's permit, the head of the district granted him a guard so he could take photos without being run over.

Since then, every evening, two jeeps and a few wardens on bicycles took control of the street and organized single-lane to let Bartolome take his pic-

tures. This went on for almost three weeks.

"The Olympic summer in Shibali District was one of the highlights of my life," he said.

Three months ago, Bartolome returned to Shibali District. He found its walls, doorways and a few old acquaintances.

"Some old friends told me that the doors and walls were on reprieve. Shibali District will soon be no more than an enormous construction site, which will give rise to a new, more modern city centred on its university," he said.

### Love for common people

Born in 1950, Bartolome is of French, Spanish, Italian and German decent. He has many identities such as photographer, stage director, artistic manager, writer and diplomat.

He also created the Festival Croisements, an annual Sino-French culture festival that began in 2006. Each year, Croisements enables hundreds of artists from the two countries to sharing their work and passion with festival-goers.

But Bartolome's biggest interest was to capture common people's lives with his lens.

Bartolome was entranced by Beijing on his first visit in 1993 and immediately wanted to go back. Over the years, he has grown attached to the city, but his love is its people.

"I do not photograph China or Beijing. I photograph the path of people through superficial appearances, people waiting, thinking, and acting; their struggles, sorrows, joys and hopes," Bartolome said.

"The dynamism of China, of its young people, its artists, poets, and entrepreneurs is contagious. It gives me a rush like a drug; it keeps me buoyant and sweeps me along," he added.

Bartolome said he will continue to record local people's lives through his lens.

"I can be alone in Beijing, but I am never lonely," he said.



# Festival to show new wave of Indian film

By Han Manman

Local people who are interested in Indian film and culture have until Sunday to visit the Beijing Indian Film Festival.

The 10-day event, entitled "You Don't Belong: Past and Futures of the Indian Cinema" will provide locals a chance to see the new wave of Indian independent films that diverges from singing and dancing Bollywood epics.

Held by the Indian Embassy in Beijing and Central Academy of Fine Arts, more than 40 Indian independent films will be screened at the Iberia Center, the Beijing Film Academy and the Ullens Center for Contemporary Art (UCCA) during the festival.

According to Pratik Mathur, second secretary of the Indian embassy and co-organizer of the event, the films were shot on modest budgets and tackle bold topics including sex, crime and voyeurism. The genre range from fantasy to documentary. All are being screened in China for the first time.



On the opening ceremony of Beijing Indian Film Festival in the Iberia Center.

Photo provided by Iberia Center

LSD: Love, Sex and Betrayal) directed by Dibakar Banerjee is the highlight of the festival. It will be screened on Saturday at UCCA.

The voyeuristic film focuses on three tales that intertwine against the backdrop of modern urban India. It was shot entirely on handheld cameras and is one of the first films from India to

be presented in the "found footage" style.

Dubbed as the only Indian film to reference sex and drugs in both its title and abbreviation, LSD was approved by censors despite its nudity and became a box office hit in India last year.

"The films showcase the cinematic transition that has taken place in the world's largest filmmaking country,

from the era of celluloid into a new globalized era of digital media and social networking," Mathur said, adding that the film is also considered to be a leader among new Indian independent films that break with Bollywood's flamboyant style.

Besides the films, a series of forums on film and social thought will also take place during the festival. A season

of films plus forums on film theory and social thought, showcasing a full range of recent Indian cinema, have been specially selected and assembled to create debate about the moving image in India. The selection includes feature-length fiction films, documentaries and experimental video.

Mathur said the festival is a follow-up event after the West Heavens project last year.

West Heavens is an initiative for fostering ties between India and China through collaborations in art and social thought. Last year, it presented a major art exhibition alongside a series of intellectual forums.

The Art Exhibition and India-China Summit on Social Thought were highly acclaimed by both the public and experts.

All movies screened at the festival will have English and Chinese subtitles.

The festival ends Sunday in Beijing and will then move to Shanghai, Guangzhou, and Kunming.

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BEIJING TODAY Editor: Han Manman Designer: Zhao Yan

# Swing Beijing to host first Swingtime Ball this month

By Annie Wei

Dance group Swing Beijing has hosted a series of excited events since its establishment in 2003. Its first Swingtime Ball will kick off at the Worker's Stadium on December 17. The group hopes it will become an annual event.

"It will be a cool and fun event," said Josh Dominic, an American core member and coach of Swing Beijing. It will feature the gypsy jazz styling of the Hot Club of Beijing, a two-year-old live band that performs regularly.

The band's tunes, inspired by Django Reinhardt, a guitar virtuoso of the 1930s, will be echoed by the period decoration and the vintage dress code, Dominic said.

The night will have six performances by professionals and dance students, with prizes donated by Fubar.

In the past eight years, Swing Beijing has been an active member of Beijing's expat community. It has regular classes every week. The public can see their performances in parks or squares



Swing Beijing's dance competition

such as the Sanlitun Village on weekend afternoons, with big events like "Swing on the Great

Wall" hosted every year.

The group has attracted 500 participants, with more than 50 members showing up

to each of the regular classes.

To improve the swing dancers' skill, the group started a Swing Dance Com-

petition five years ago. It brings in dancers from Shanghai, Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea and the US, and sends dancers abroad for exchange.

Dominic said that swing dance became better known domestically when *Feng Sheng (The Message)* hit the big screen in 2009. The film features a beautifully choreographed dance scene between actress Zhou Xun and Adam Lee, the founder of Swing Beijing.

Swing is a jazz-inspired dance for couples that reached its height in the 1930s and '40s, growing alongside American jazz legends like Benny Goodman and Duke Ellington. The dance saw a renaissance in the '90s with the help of American dancing legend Frankie Manning. In Asia, South Korea has the biggest swing scene, with 3,000 regular dancers.

Swing Beijing also offers private classes. For more details, visit [swingbeijing.com](http://swingbeijing.com), or [hotclubofbeijing.com](http://hotclubofbeijing.com) for their music.

## Swingtime Ball

Where: Inside the Worker's Stadium,

When: Saturday December 17, 7 pm

Email: [swingbeijinginfo@gmail.com](mailto:swingbeijinginfo@gmail.com)

Cost: 80 yuan at the door, 60 yuan in advance

Photos provided by Swing Beijing



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# New contract protects the benefits of fitness club customers

By Zhao Hongyi

Many foreigners like to go to fitness clubs to exercise, meet friends or relax.

But a number of bankruptcies of Beijing clubs, including Body Strong Fitness, Alexander Club, and Olympic 08 Fitness Club, have caused their customers great losses. Many operators fail to compensate customers for months that were paid for in advance.

These scandals have urged the authorities to impose higher criteria and supervision of such clubs.

The Municipal Industry and Commerce Bureau issued a new version of the operating contracts for the industry this week, emphasizing that owners of club cards must be able to get a refund of membership within the first seven days, and that the remaining membership must be refunded if the clubs go bankrupt.

The contract applies to clubs offering fitness, ball games, swimming, yoga and martial arts that provide services after the customers deposit cash and open a membership card.

The standard contract requires that all cards, no matter if they are based on consuming times, consuming hours or consuming deposits, should have a minimum validity of three years.

When the cards expire, the service provider must issue a new card to those who have remaining deposits in their old card. One-year cards



Angry members gather at a gym that just closed, showing their new membership cards.

CFP Photo

and one-season cards will automatically terminate when they expire.

If the clubs close on days besides legal holidays for more than 24 hours or the card owners freeze their cards temporarily under an agreement with the issuers, the clubs should prolong the date

of expiry accordingly.

If the card issuers adjust their operating hours after the scope of their business or close down, they must inform the card holders.

The contract requires all clubs to list the first seven days after issuing as a "trial week." Card owners have the

right to withdraw unconditionally, and the issuers must pay the whole deposit amount to the card holder.

It also lists five prohibited practices: no adjustment of prices without negotiation, no shortening of the length of card validity, no cut to the services promised, no closing

of the only branch if the club has no other branches in operation, and no unilateral increase on the restrictions of the use of the card.

Consumers have the right to withdraw and cancel the card if the business engages in such practices. The two parties can calculate amount owed to the consumer based on their remaining card usage value.

When issuing the cards, the issuer must clearly list the branches that can provide services to the customer.

Earlier this year, a fitness club told its customers that its Dongdan branch was closing, but they could still use their cards in its branch in Beijing's northwest suburban county of Yanqing. "This situation will no longer happen again." The bureau promised.

The new contract is available from December 1. Thirty two fitness clubs promised to be bound by the new contract and its requirements, including Nirvana, Hosa and CSI-Bally Total.

Sports and leisure clubs emerged in Beijing during the last decade.

Many foreigners use cash at such clubs in case of membership problems or closures. However, opening a card for three years enables consumers to exercise regularly and save money.

The municipal bureau expects the new version of the contract will further improve the market and help to regulate the industry.

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# 'Traveler's' installations translate China

By He Jianwei

While 75-year-old Greek artist Janis Kounellis is not well-known in China, he has found himself in the limelight for his use of Chinese materials in his new works.

During the past two years, Kounellis traveled to cities and rural areas in China, collecting materials for his creations.

As one of the representatives of Arte Povera, Kounellis travels often, seeking new inspiration to continue his 50-year art career. A self-described traveler, he hopes to be able to bring as much to China as he takes back from it.



Untitled, 2011



Changsha, 2011



An installation of 4,600 shot glasses filled with Erguotou, a grain spirit.

New works in the exhibition *Translating China* reflect Kounellis' deep thoughts and analysis of the country. His works explore profound theories in simple language that capture the connection between reality, tradition, memory and context.

Kounellis' new installations were created specially for Today Art Museum to emphasize the connection between art and exhibition space.

The smell of coffee pervades on the second floor of the museum. The scent comes from Kounellis' steel plates piled high with coffee grounds, hanging in front of a wax-printed fabric he collected in the Xiangxi Tujia and Miao Autonomous Prefecture of Hunan Province.

Stepping into the third floor, a strong smell of alcohol assails the audience's nostrils. It is Kounellis' installation, composed of 4,600 shot glasses filled with Erguotou, a grain spirit.

Besides the fabric and alcohol, Chinese elements permeate his work.

But Kounellis does not employ them intentionally. His focus was initially on interesting objects that crossed his path while traveling the country.

"When I visited the Panjiayuan antique market, I was astonished that people were buying broken porcelain. So I bought some pieces and used them in my work," Kounellis said on November 18 at the main hall of the museum.

The porcelain became part of a huge installation in the main hall. Its construction resembles a Great Wall of tin boxes and coal. Several iron sheets use the broken porcelain as an inlay.

When Kounellis asked the seller why he was selling broken porcelain, he was told that the pieces were smashed during the Cultural Revolution, when Red Guards ransacked the homes of the wealthy and confiscated their possessions.

"Chinese artists use broken porcelain in their installations to show a cynical attitude toward traditional culture. But Kounellis rearranges the fragmented porcelain according to size, creating a visual tempo of letters," said Huang Du, curator of the exhibition.

Born in 1936 in Piraeus, Greece, Kounellis moved to Rome, Italy to train at the Academy of Fine Arts in 1956.

"When one is 18 years old, the choice is simple. You hop a train and go to Italy. It is not such a big deal. Italy was where I met some artists, with whom I tried to critically invent an artistic language," Kounellis said in a dialogue with Huang.

In 1960, Kounellis presented his first solo exhibition at the Galleria La Tartaruga, the first gallery of contemporary art in Rome. The exhibition showed paintings composed of numbers, letters and arrows.

They were phonetic, like music. Actually, I sang my art," he said.

He was influenced by the Italian poet Giuseppe Ungaretti, who wrote phonetic and hermetic poetry.

Kounellis contributed to the birth of Arte Povera, which was the first contemporary movement in Italy. The concept was proposed by Italian art critic Germano Celant in 1967 at an exhibition in Genoa. It refers to artists using devaluated industrial, daily and natural materials for the purpose of expression.

At that time, Kounellis started to give up painting and turn to installation, using materials like iron, cotton, earth and earth in his exhibition. He used living creatures in his art most notably in one installation that included 12 horses at the L'Attico gallery in Rome in 1969.

Because of his background, Kounellis is interested in epic and romantic stories. One of his favorite artists is French Romantic Eugene Delacroix, famous for his painting *Liberty Leading the People*.

Kounellis is also fascinated by the history of China. "The 12th and 13th century in Chinese history are epic periods that attract me a lot," he said.

So when Giuseppe Mario invited Kounellis to come to China, Kounellis leaped at the opportunity.

Mario had visited China many times in the past 15 years. "I sensed both a growing interest in European art among Chinese artists, as well as the need to increase in a direct exchange of experiences... So I initiated a project in order to contribute to and encourage dialogue between them," Mario said.

Although Kounellis is 75, he has never lost his curiosity for new culture nor his desire to create new works.

He visited China four times in the past two years. "If I had to choose a color to describe the country, I would choose yellow," he said, pointing to one of his works composed of yellow silk. "Yellow is the color of the sun, and China has a lot of energy."

"If I had to choose a color to describe the country, I would choose yellow. Yellow is the color of the sun, and China has a lot of energy."



Photo: screen print in black ink with lined oil relief plate from the Untitled, 1989



This installation uses iron sheets with broken porcelain inlays.



Watercolor, 2010-2011

Photos provided by Today Art Museum

**Translating China**

Where: Today Art Museum, 32 Baiziwai Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until December 13, 10 am - 5 pm

Admission: 20 yuan, 10 yuan for students

Tel: 5876 9804



# Scandal and tragedy in '70s Hollywood

By Charles Zhu

Peter Bart, vice-president of Paramount Pictures from 1967 to 1975, offers a glimpse into Hollywood's scandals, sex and tragedy in his new book *Infamous Players*.

The book focuses on the transition period between the old studio system and directing auteur that took place in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

The book may be a rebuttal of sorts to the Hollywood scenes described in Paramount's head of production and clothing scion Robert Evans's 1994 book *The Kid Stays In The Picture* and *Peter Biskind's Easy Riders, Raging Bulls*.

Bart left his job as a *New York Times* reporter in 1967 to become Paramount Pictures' second production executive at a time when historic studios were being rejuvenated by independent, visionary filmmakers. Bart writes that "at age 35, being of sound mind and body," he managed to "go to the dark side." The book gives an account of his timidity about leaving journalism. He would return later in life as editor-in-chief of *Variety*.

Together with Robert Evans, he helped pull Paramount out of the disastrous years of big-budget films like *Darling Lili* into profitable era of *The Godfather*, *Rosemary's Baby* and *Chinatown*.

Bart describes himself as the Sancho Panza to production head Robert Evans, who finally turned out to be a cocaine-fueled Don Quixote.

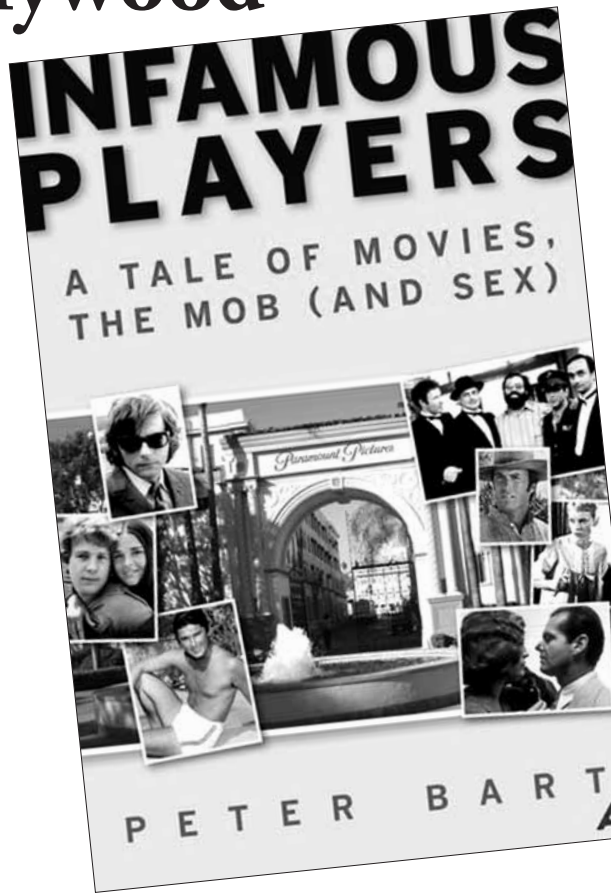
In *Infamous Players*, Bart offers his own understanding of Evans' most exaggerated stories. He writes, "On reflection, I don't know whether I should love him or hate him." He writes that Evans' hospitality was such that he sounded like both a power broker and a pimp.

He had a penetrating and well-balanced description of the Hollywood business. He writes, "I did not know where Cecil B. DeMille's old office was located, nor on which soundstage Elvis Presley had just finished shooting." However, this did not stop Bart from throwing out a lot of famous names in his book to catch the attention of readers who are expecting them. His memoir recalled the team building in such classics as *Harold and Maude* and had assessments of Warren Beatty, Robert Redford and Clint Eastwood.

Bart also recalls his doubts about the employment of Paddy Chayefsky as a script doctor on the 1969 musical *Paint Your Wagon* and remembers arguing that Chayefsky was better suited to satire like *Network*, which came out in 1976.

Bart calls Evans a world-class womanizer.

He writes that "there was an understanding within Evans's pul-



**Infamous Players: A Tale of Movies, the Mob, (and Sex)**  
By Peter Bart, 288pp, Weinstein, \$25

chritudinous inventory that these were to be one-night stands and that all emotions expressed therein were perforce evanescent." He also thinks that drug abuse and "rampant egomania" played a part in the fall of many Hollywood professionals. "But the hit movies of the sixties and seventies were themselves narcotics," he writes.

The current film industry might still be suffering from the hangover, he writes.

Bart's book has a scathing portrait of corporate corruption as represented by Charles Bluhdorn, the chairman of Paramount's parent company, Gulf & Western. Bart says that Bluhdorn allowed European gangsters to invest in the studio and that his instinct for movies was even worse.

Bart recalls the making of *The Godfather*, *Chinatown*, *Love Story*, *Rosemary's Baby* and Peter Bogdanovich's *Daisy Miller*, *The Great Gatsby* and *Sheila Levine Is Dead and Living in New York*.

He had perfect confidence in his better taste and prides himself in championing the sweet *Love Story*, whose immense success made him "smile and wince" because the film

was "as bogus as it was effective."

He recalls once telling Woody Allen's "very protective handlers" that Allen would not direct his screenplay of *Play It Again, Sam*. That job would be handled by "Herb Ross, the esteemed director of *Funny Girl*," whose work was "more accessible."

Bart writes that Eastwood insisted on having his friend Don Siegel direct *Dirty Harry* because Eastwood "wanted the assurance" after the commercial failure of his first movie as a director, *Play Misty for Me*.

Bart reveals that he was there when Julie Christie and Donald Sutherland were shooting their bedroom scene, which led to rumors that they had really had sex on camera. Bart says that he happened to be visiting the set and was standing by director Nicolas Roeg's side as the actors rolled around. However, Sutherland released a statement saying that Bart wasn't a witness at all, and that only the actors, the director and the cinematographer were in the room.

The book is funny and informative and will guide the readers through an interesting and dizzying tour of 1970s Paramount.

## Timezone 8 book listing

Timezone 8 is a Hong Kong-based publisher, distributor and retailer of books on contemporary art, architecture, photography and design. This week, it recommends three upcoming titles to *Beijing Today* readers.



### Sun Xun: Chinese Contemporary Art Awards 2010

By Sun Xun, 160pp, Timezone 8, \$40

Sun Xun, who graduated from the Printmaking Department at the China Academy of Fine Arts in 2005, was recognized as China's Best Young Artist at the Chinese Contemporary Art Awards 2010. He confirms and renews the importance of traditional art forms, applying old techniques within new media.



### Contemporary Art in Shanghai: Conversations with Seven Chinese Artists

By Paul Gladston, 96pp, Timezone 8, \$34.95

This book contains conversations between Paul Gladston and seven Chinese artists in Shanghai recorded from 2007 to 2009. While contemporary art in and around Shanghai conforms to many of the established conventions of a now internationalized contemporary art scene, it is also informed by feelings of national and local cultural identity, as well as an acute, localized awareness of the changing circumstances that have taken place both within and outside China as part of globalization.



### Duan Jianyu: The Seduction of Village

By Duan Jianyu, 110pp, Timezone 8, \$30

This album collects the paintings exhibited at The Seduction of Village, Duan Jianyu's solo exhibition held last November in Beijing. Her paintings contain scenes of contemporary China - both villages and cities - full of vigor, but also incredibly trite.

(By He Jianwei)

# Making art affordable

By He Jianwei

With contemporary art breaking auction records, the form seems to be becoming increasingly inaccessible to the public.

But a few new galleries are determined to reverse the auction-house trend and help Chinese households inject some creative flair into their home decor.

Located in The Sanlitun Village North, the new gallery babù space opened last year to promote young artists and foster young collectors. Its director firmly believes that art can change life.



In 2007, Piao Jinghai worked in the marketing department of a company in Shenzhen, Guangdong Province. That was when he and his friends opened their first gallery - a small collection in Shenzhen that was devoted to art appreciation.

When he moved to Beijing two years later, his first task was to check out the leading art zones of 798 Art District and 22 International Art Plaza.

What he saw inspired him to open a gallery in Sanlitun.

"The artistic atmosphere is quite good in the art district, but the big galleries have already taken the best positions. Trying to enter that area meant being swallowed up by the big galleries," Piao said.

Piao's new gallery targets shoppers at The Village: young consumers with an interest in fashion and avant-garde. He calls them the collectors of the future.

The contrast between Piao's

approach and the auction market could not be more stark.

Today, more than 80 percent of auction shoppers buy art as an investment. They buy pieces by famous artists at prices of several millions and sell them within three years. "Many buyers don't even love the work - they only buy it because the price will go up rapidly," he said.

In a Chinese collector's villa, Piao saw the walls decorated with "valuable" paintings by leading oil painters. "When I asked him whether he loved the painters' work, he told me that he didn't, but that all the paintings could easily be sold at auction," Piao said.

While more people are buying art, few appreciate it.

"I want to support people who buy art because they love it, not because they want to make money," he said.

To attract young collectors, Piao chooses the exhibitions by young artists, whose works are inexpensive but have great potential for appreciation.

He refuses to exhibit political and erotic pop art, citing that such works have saturated the auction house scene. He prefers to choose the work, which gives the audience a feeling of peace. Most pieces sell for between 10,000 and 100,000 yuan.

"Some are around 100,000 to 500,000 yuan, which is suitable for investment," he said.

Besides art, the gallery also sells prints from the exhibitions of masters such as Marc Chagall, Henri Matisse and Alberto Giacometti. "Each is sold for around 1,500 to 2,500 yuan with frame. People can hang them up on their wall directly without going to a frame shop. The prints are often a single piece from the artist's collection," he said.

One European art collector told him that his love for collecting art came from seeing albums of masters' works in his childhood.

"Many Chinese parents encourage their children to study drawing. I hope these affordable prints can expose more children to an artistic atmosphere," he said.

Numbered exhibition prints have great collectable value. Most were printed in the mid-1970s in runs of fewer than 1,000. Today, many have only one remaining copy.

The gallery also sells photographs of the pieces. Unsigned photographs sell for less than 1,000 yuan. People buy the photographs not for investment, but to decorate their home.



Photos provided by babù space

## **babù space**

Where: Unit N2-40, The Sanlitun Village, 11 Sanlitun Lu, Chaoyang District  
Tel: 6415 8616



**"I want to support people who buy art because they love it, not because they want to make money."**



# Warm winter shopping, the digital way

By Annie Wei

As December begins, shoppers are planning trips to Hong Kong for the Christmas sales. For people who have no time to take a flight or just dislike browsing shops in the cold, here are *Beijing Today's* online shopping picks.



## UGG-style boots, starting from 400 yuan

Even cold weather can seem lovely when looking at leather and fur shoes. These types of shoes are a must-have every season. But this winter, there is something new. For example, UGG added sequins to create a "bling" look. Boots tend to be over-the-knee, allowing women to keep the slim-mest possible profile during winter.

However, brands like UGG or Bally can be too expensive. To achieve the same winter look and cozy feel, try [store.taobao.com/?shop\\_id=35086252](http://store.taobao.com/?shop_id=35086252).



## Tangram coat, 736 yuan

Designer Zhang Yanxi's coat (37 percent of wool and 63 percent polyester) can be worn in different styles with buttons or a matching belt. Zhang graduated from the Beijing Institute of Fashion Technology in 2005 and then studied in Italy, working for Italian brands Frankie Morello and Valentino Red.

We also like her checker short coat (price to be decided), which has a geometric pattern that can brighten up winter boredom.

In 2010, Zhang started her own brand, Tangram.

Website: [d2c.tmall.com](http://d2c.tmall.com)



## Antler light, 490 yuan

This beautifully shaped antler is made of thin white ceramic with an LED bulb inside. It has a rechargeable battery that can last for five hours.

Website: [creatife.com](http://creatife.com)



## Toothpick holder, 368 yuan

The holder's shape is inspired by the hats of government officers during the Qing Dynasty. The lid is paired with a delicately made silk ponytail. It's a thoughtful gift for friends.

The holder is from designer Lü Yongzhong's brand Banmoo, which was established in 2006. Lü is one of the leading furniture designers in China, and his designs include many Chinese elements.

Website: [duhub.com](http://duhub.com)



## 'She brings in love' Necklace, 2,760 yuan

The name does not seem to have anything to do with the necklace, except perhaps for the dreamy and romantic look it conveys. This delicate piece is handmade by the designer from ceramic and silver.

Website: [duhub.com](http://duhub.com)

Photos by Felix Gan/Yang Yun

# Drinks for chilly nights

By Annie Wei

Alcohol can be great all-year round; from light summer thirst-quenchers to warming winter concoctions. This week, *Beijing Today* scouts a new restaurant and bar that offers not only Japanese cocktails, improvisational dishes and Jazz music, but also hosts cooking classes and a flea-market. There are also a few easy cocktail recipes that use Grand Marnier.

## Jam Bar: more than a restaurant and bar

Tucked in a creative culture base in Gulou Dong Dajie, Jam Bar is easily recognized by the Jam sign hanging on a grey-brick building. Walk up the outdoor stairs to enter the spacious venue.

After just two months of trading, Jam Bar has become a popular destination for "literate youth," a popular slang expression for people who work in the culture and media industries.

The most impressive part is the bar's open kitchen. Owner Ryu, who prefers to be called this after his time spent living and studying in Japan, also works as the bar's bartender and chef. His bar is very much of a Japanese style.

The menu is not yet fully ready. But whenever you want to eat something, talk to Ryu and he will prepare it – as long as he is not too busy making cocktails. So far, the place does not have another bartender who makes drinks like Ryu.

Ryu majored in law and international communications, but those did not interest him. In Jam Bar, you should ask him to make you one of his cocktails.

The most recommended cocktails include the Sharapova (60 yuan). "It's just a name, not having anything to do with that Russian tennis player," Ryu said. It's made of gin, white cacao, condensed milk and strawberries, tasting smooth and not strong.

Another one is the Godzilla USA (60 yuan). "It's not like a traditional cocktail, but has been modified in Japan," Ryu said. It's made of gin, almond, papaya and lemon juice.

Before starting Jam Bar, Ryu prepared for four years. "There are many details to be considered." But once this place was ready, it took him 22 days to start operation.

Although Jam Bar's menu is not yet finalized, it is a wonderful place to host parties and events. Last week, they prepared a Thanksgiving dinner party for 60 people, with two roasted turkeys, all the trimmings, and dessert.

Three weeks ago, it hosted a winter party from 3 pm with a cooking class, music performance and a flea market. Many of Jam's neighbors along East Gulou Avenue – such as Mega Mega Vintage, Paris Pekin Antique Shop, and Eleanor's – joined the event.

People who are interested in renting Jam Bar's kitchen and space can contact Ryu for details.

### Jam Bar

Where: Floor 2, Building C, 206, Gulou Dong Dajie, Dongcheng District  
Open: 7 pm to 2 am  
Tel: 6404 8218



Jam bar owner Ryu



Making a cocktail



A simple dish made by Ryu



Tom Waits

Photos by Madi



Cosmopolitan

Photos provided by Grand Marnier

## DIY cocktails at home

Drinks like margaritas and cosmopolitans are popular in bars, especially among female customers. In fact, they are easy to make at home. All you need are some cocktail shakers (less than 100 yuan from Taobao), a bottle of gin (150 yuan), Grand Marnier (200-300 yuan for the regular version and 400 to 500 yuan the limited edition), ginger ale (5 yuan per bottle), a bag of ice cubes (15 yuan from supermarkets like April Gourmet) and a few different fruits. Just be careful to get your alcohol from a reputable store or distributors.

### Margarita

Put 30 milliliters Grand Marnier, 40 milliliters Tequila, 20 milliliters of lime juice and ice in a shaker. Shake well and pour into a cocktail glass with salt rubbed on the rim. The salt can be added to the rim by first dipping the rim of the glass in lemon or lime juice, and then onto a plate dusted with salt.

### Ginger cocktails

Smash a piece of fresh ginger, squeeze in the juice of half a lime and one slice of fresh orange, and add 50 milliliters Grand Marnier liqueur. Shake with ice and filter the mixture twice. Pure it into a highball glass full of ice and top up with ginger ale.

### Cosmopolitan

Shake 20 milliliters Grand Marnier, 30 milliliters vodka, 40 milliliters cranberry juice and a few drops of lime juice with ice.



Margarita



Ginger cocktail



Forbidden red dragon

### Forbidden red dragon

Shake 40 milliliters Grand Marnier, 12 milliliters vodka, 25 milliliters raspberry puree, 5 milliliters strawberry syrup and 80 milliliters of jasmine tea with ice.

Pour the mixture into a glass and garnish with some rose pedals.



# Internet inspires new folk singer

By He Jianwei

Since 2004, a storm of amateur singers on the Internet has swept China. Many, such as independent folk musician Shao Yibei, become famous overnight when their songs are spread online.

Unlike other songs, Shao's are not sweet love songs. She is more critical of reality and her songs depict the sorrow, confusion, hope and expectations of the young generation.

Last month, she released her second full length album, *The Grey Race*. From this Friday, she will begin her tour of 11 cities.



Shao Yibei's video of playing guitar and singing a song about leftover women received 20 million hits online in 2009. CFP Photo

"Miss Wang is 31 years old. Her friends often ask the same question when they meet: when will you get married? But marriage is not a question that she could decide herself. She asks her father and her mother. They tell her hurry up," Shao sings in "Song for the Elder Artistic Women."

In 2009, a video of her playing guitar and singing this song about leftover women received 20 million hits online.

Many netizens suspected the musician was singing about her own story, but in the same year, she finished her postgraduate studies at Communication University of China and she became one of the most popular Internet singer-songwriters.

Born in 1983 in Qingdao, Shandong Province, Shao loved rock music in high school. One of her idols was Zhang Chu, one of the most prominent rock stars in the 1990s. Shao still remembers when she and her friends ate instant noodles for two months to save enough money for Zhang's concert in Qingdao.

After the concert, she hoped to see her idol and went backstage with her friends, but the security guard stopped them. They cried until one of the staff brought them backstage. They sang Zhang's songs and Zhang wept with them late into the night. Zhang gave them 100 yuan to take a taxi home. Rather than spend the money they framed it.

Maybe because of her love of rock music, she failed the college entrance examination and had to retake the examination again in 2002. To her surprise, she was admitted to the Journalism Department at Peking University

as the highest-ranking student in the examination in Qingdao.

When she was a sophomore, she became a drummer in her first band. But after graduation, the band fell apart. During her graduate study, she formed another band with two German students.

In early 2009, she learned guitar. In the first three months, she wrote several songs, including "Song for the Elder Artistic Women." She was inspired by a concert of Zhou Yunpeng, a blind folk musician, whose compositions possess a penetrating power that cuts straight to the heart of even the bitterest cynic.

Shao wrote the song the day after she watched his concert. In February 2009, she sang it in front of her friends. One of them filmed it and put it on the Internet. Less than one month later, she became famous and has since been regarded as one of the pioneers of contemporary Chinese music.

Last year, she released her debut album, *Stolen Time*, looking at the current issues of the time and questioning problems in reality. For instance, in the song "Who Stole Your Time," she keeps on asking who polluted the sky and who believes in money.

On her second album, *The Grey Race*, she also criticizes money grubbers in the song "The Paper Currency Flying in the Wind." She depicts an unscrupulous businessman who produces beverages. "A child buys the beverage he produces. In the hospital, parents are crying. The tough life makes people beyond rational. He consoled himself with the thought that it is a world of the weak falling victim to the strong," she sings.



The cover of Shao's debut album, *Stolen Time*



The cover of Shao's second album, *The Grey Race*, released last month

## Shao Yibei's Tour Concert

Where: The One Club, Building 5, 718 Art and Culture Zone, 19 Ganluyuan, Gaobeidian Bei Lu, Chaoyang District

When: December 3, 8 pm

Admission: 80 yuan advance purchase, 100 yuan at the door

Tel: 5129 0082

“I treat my works as I do my own children, I don't care if people are fond of them, as long as I created them with my best efforts.”

# Filmed for an audience of one



Topical Malady opened Apichatpong's first solo exhibition in Beijing.



*Tropical Malady*, which won a jury prize at the 2004 Cannes Film Festival, opened Apichatpong's first solo exhibition in Beijing last Sunday.

Apichatpong was on a tight schedule during his first visit to the city, but he spoke slowly to the Chinese audience and answered their questions patiently.

His latest feature film *Uncle Boonmee Who Can Recall His Past Lives* won the Palme d'Or Prize at Cannes Film Festival last year, but Chinese press still prefer his 2004 film, which won the jury prize.

Apichatpong's achievements have done much to light up Asian cinema, since the last time an Asian filmmaker took the top prize at Cannes was 1997, when Japanese director Shohei Imamura shared it with Iranian Abbas Kiarostami.

"Uncle Boonmee" continues Apichatpong's long-take style and follows his frequent topics of jungles, ghosts, immigrants, religion and sex. It tells the story of a dying man who encounters the ghosts of his dead wife and son, and who discovers his past life in a cave on the other side of a jungle.

For him, the jungle is "home" – a place with "the freedom to do anything in it." Most of his films are set in the jungle. In *Uncle Boonmee*, the director shot a long scene showing the family going across the jungle to reach the place where he was born in his previous life.

Ghosts are another essential element. However, Apichatpong does not believe in ghosts – he uses them as a

symbol of things that are lost.

"All Thai people believe in ghosts. They believe everything has a spirit, even a tree. I grew up there as a kid, so it's hard for me to shake off the superstition. For me, it is nonsense, but I wouldn't say it is impossible. I have experienced things that I can't explain. I saw a apparition in Paris, but when I tried to communicate with her she disappeared," he said.

"My films focus on reincarnating things that have passed, such as certain styles of movies and TV. We all copy classic Hollywood films, but I miss that style. For me it is a ghost," he said.

Apichatpong, 41, was born in Bangkok and grew up in Khon Kaen. He took an interest in film after discovering the small cinema in his hometown – an alternative place for him to play beside the hospital where his parents worked. After studying architecture in Khon Kaen University, he went on to earn a master's degree in filmmaking at Art Institute of Chicago in 1997. Two years later, he founded his own company, Kick the Machine, to produce and promote his works.

He tried his best to be independent and to make films under the censorship system in Thailand. When *Syndromes and a Century*, his favorite film, was produced in 2006, its release was delayed while the Thai censorship board demanded he cut several scenes from the movie. Apichatpong refused to make the cuts and began a public protest.

Eventually, he arranged private screenings. His protests changed Thailand law, and the government began to adopt a film rating system.

But the struggle is still ongoing. Apichatpong said when one recent film about a transsexual parent was banned, the filmmaker sued the government's censorship board in court. The case is still awaiting a verdict, but he believes such actions will help to improve the system.

Until then, Apichatpong plans to turn his attention to Thailand's minority issues, including homosexuality and Burmese immigrants, and how these people are marginalized.

Recently, he focused on the Mekong River, and how an unanticipated flood and drought has affected lives of people in

Thailand, Laos and Cambodia.

Apichatpong said his ethnic roots are Chinese, and that his grandfather was from a place in southwest China. He is interested in going to search for his roots, and may turn the quest into a film.

## Q&A about Thai films:

**Beijing Today (BT):** How are independent films developed in Thailand?

**Apichatpong:** It is similar to how they are developed elsewhere in the world, and that is a good thing. Both mainstream Hollywood films and independent films can contribute to each other. If all people made were independent films, it would be very boring – that's why I appreciate Hollywood movies. Another good thing is that mainstream theaters are opening up to our work. Many have 10 screens for mainstream releases and one screen reserved for independent cinema. I don't expect independent films to flourish, because we need to be on the edge in order to make good films.

**BT:** What do you think the biggest problems are in Thai cinema?

**Apichatpong:** I think we lack people with good business sense. We have no shortage of creatives. But good business requires some risk – that's not something the Thai people running the studios are willing to take. It's an education problem, which advocates simple right or wrong but ignores gray areas. Children don't have a sense of "freedom" in our moral-oriented country.

**BT:** You have said sex is safer than political issues in Thai films. Why else do you present sex in your films?

**Apichatpong:** It is simply because I want to record life. Sex is just something that people do. It is one of the issues that show human progress. In the old days, we didn't talk about it. But if you showed modern films to people 50 years ago, they would be shocked by the sexual content – even in simple Hollywood films. In the future, we will be even more honest about sex and our bodies.

## For Tomorrow, For Tonight

Where: UCCA, 798 Art District, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District  
When: Until February 10, 2012  
Tel: 5780 0200/0201  
Admission: 15 yuan for film



Apichatpong in Beijing  
Photo by Mockingbird



# Natural beauties in southern Xinjiang

By Zhang Dongya

Tianshan Mountain splits the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region into northern and southern regions. The northern part is famous for its beautiful scenery, such as Kanas and Tianchi lakes.

But Hotan, located in the southern part of Xinjiang, also has stunning landscapes to be explored, as well as plenty of culture and history. With the Kunlun Mountains, Taklamakan Desert and Karakash River, Hotan offers desolate scenery full of magnificent beauty.

The Karakash, or Black Jade River, is a major river flowing through Hotan. It originates in the Karakoram Range and zigzags through the mountains, flowing to Uluwarty – a large scenic spot along the river.

After passing through Hotan City, Pishan County and Moyu (Black Jade) County in Hotan Prefecture, the river converges with the Yurungkash River. It forms many beautiful lakes as it leads along to the Hotan River.

## Uluwarty reservoir

Located in Langru Town of Hotan County, Uluwarty Scenic Spot is a large reservoir that was completed in 2001. The water in the reservoir is as deep as 110 meters, with a dam 131 meters high.

Uluwarty means "great father" in Uyghur. The large area of water is pure blue, shining in the sun. The entire area is surrounded by low mountains, which are bare and gray. The mountains are all different shapes, many of which resemble strange images such as a lion, a tortoise and an old man. The dry mountains and blue water form a sharp contrast with each other – a scene rarely encountered in the country.

In the south, there are several small islands. The variety of plants makes the islands a haven for many kinds of birds, including grey cranes and wild geese and ducks.

The speed boat, which can take 10 people at a time, is also quite popular. The flying spray will always excite visitors, and offers a ride that goes deep into the large reservoir. You can see attractions including the Little Three Gorges in Kunlun and Eighteen Bends, where the water twists and turns around mountains.

The Rare Rock Hall is built to show special rocks that have been produced in the Karakash River, which is famous for its white and greenish jade. At the entrance of the Hall is a large greenish jade piece produced in the upper stream of Karakash River. It is 2.4 tons and now is very smooth and shiny thanks to all the visitors who have touched it. There are also specimens of local animal species like the Xinjiang White Fish and wild ducks.

## Uluwarty Scenic Spot

Where: 89 Urumqi Nan Lu, Hotan

Tel: 0903-2090 004

Admission: 15 yuan, 20 yuan for the speed boat

## Other attractions along

### Karakash River

#### Cliff of Scrolls

Coming out of Aigusai Village in Langru Town, you will see the river levee at the west bank of the Karakash River. Beside the river levee is a kilometer-long maroon cliff. It looks like a long scroll of pictures, recording the history and culture of the old Hotan. The cliff, with deep gullies, shows various images of monks, clouds and horses. The images are particularly beautiful in the flow of the setting sun.

Continued on Page 21...



Dry mountains in Uluwarty

Photo by Mockingbird



Visitors taking a speed boat in Uluwarty

Photos by Lu Dan





The cliff of scrolls in Langru Town

The Kunlun Mountains  
Photos by Lü Dan

...continued from Page 20

**Four-season Lake**

Siji Lake, located downstream from Langru Town, is a freshwater lake created by a dam. With an area of 6.4 square kilometers and pure blue water it excites visitors with its desolated wildness. The lake is as beautiful as the divine lakes in Tibet. A poem recited by locals describes the pleasant scenery all year round: dark green water shining in spring, White Fish diving in summer, tranquil water in autumn and mountain shadow reflected in winter. Locals have named it the Four-season Lake, because its landscape can be enjoyed all year round.

The lake is rich in White Fish, which can be sampled in restaurants nearby. Locals will tell you a legend about the fish, which is also called the White Dragon Fish. On the journey to retrieve Buddhist sutras from India, monk Xuanzang went to the lake and heard locals were suffering from a disease. Xuanzang asked for help from the Bodhisattva Guanyin. Guanyin plucked out several hairs from the white-dragon horse and put them into the water, where they turned into white fish. Locals were cured after eating the white fish.

**Destinations in****Moyu County**

Moyu, or Black Jade, County, was once an important post along the ancient "Silk Road." It is famous for Mulberry Paper, with the technique dubbed a "living fossil" of the human papermaking industry. There is also a number of striking natural scenic spots.

**Red-White Mountain**

About 150 kilometers from Moyu County are two peaks standing in the Taklamakan Desert: the southern one is red and the northern is white. The two peaks belong to a mountain named Red-White Mountain. Seeing the two colors of the mountain next to the desert

is truly awe inspiring sight. There is also an ancient fortress in the mountain, which was built during the Eastern Han Dynasty (25-220).

**Elephant Trunk Hill**

Around the west bank of Karakash River, there is a hill much resembling the Elephant Trunk Hill in Guilin. It is at the foot of the Kunlun Mountains, beside the Moyu River in Moyu County. The "elephant trunk" leads to Karakash River, which is pure as drinking water. The river forms three small islands around the hill. Stones on the island resemble different animals, such as dogs, lions and even a Tibetan Mastiff. They lay cozily under the "trunk."

**About Hotan**

Hotan is located in southern Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. It is an oasis town in the Tarim Basin, north of the Kunlun Mountains and south of the Taklamakan Desert. Hotan Prefecture is a multi-racial area, consisting of 96 percent Uyghur and 3 percent Han.

**Traffic**

Getting to Hotan: Fly to Urumqi and then take a connecting flight to Hotan. There are two or three flights every day between Urumqi and Hotan, and they take around 90 minutes.

**Accommodation**

Yuzhou Century Hotel  
Where: 22 Yingbin Lu, Hotan  
Tel: 0903-2525 555

This four-star hotel has more than 180 rooms, three dining halls and a Halal restaurant. The average price for a standard room is 230 yuan. It is only 20 minutes from Hotan Airport by car.

**Agency**

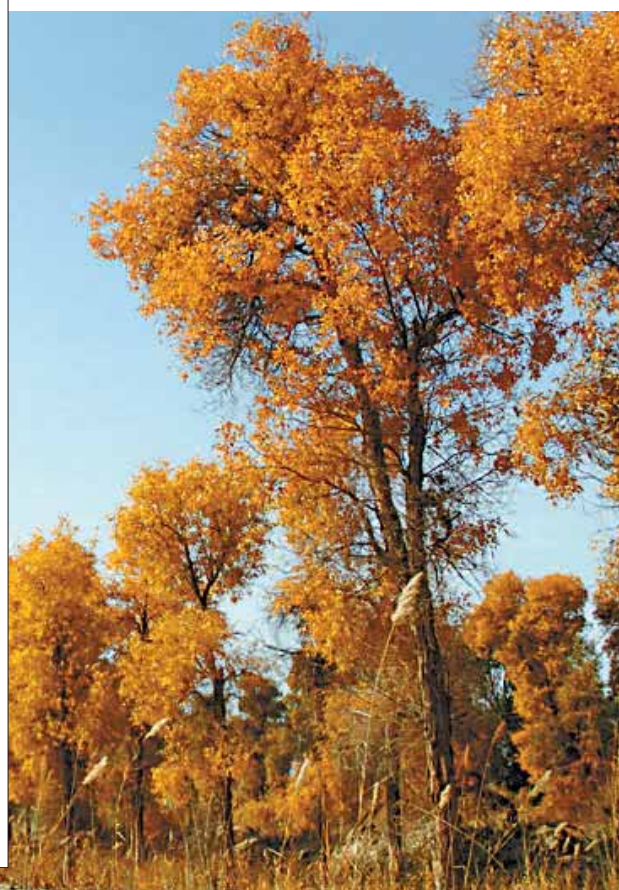
Xinjiang Discovery International Travel Service

Where: Room 402, Unit 1, Building 2, Hexie Garden, 30 Yingbin Lu, Hotan  
Tel: 0903-2028 183



Red-White Mountain in Moyu County

Photo by Mockingbird





# Online libraries save time and money

By Chu Meng

Beijing bookworms can finally access some of the latest English-language bestsellers within 24 hours via a new read-once textbook library.

Booksfly.com, a leader among the new rental websites, aims to make book reading a hassle-free, up-to-date, affordable and greener pursuit without the need for awkward e-reader devices.



**"...borrowing is great for those who do not want to spend large amounts of money or waste shelf space at home. Borrowing is also more environmentally friendly."**

The flood of new children's books on the market is attracting more young people to start reading. However, the cost of physical books continues to break the budgets of many young parents.

Moreover, most of the parents' expensive purchases are seldom read more than once by their children.

But the new concept of online book rental is seeing books fly off the virtual shelves and into the hands of more young readers.

That was exactly what Zhao Zhao, founder of Booksfly.com, hoped to see happen when he founded the company in September 2009. The site began as an online library and developed into a full-catalog library known for its English publications, textbooks and professional guide books.

Zhao is a software engineer and mother of two. She lived in the US for many years before returning to Beijing in 2004, when she began to share local parents' frustrations with finding reading material for her children.

"The prices of children's books are so high, and most books are read only once," Zhao said. "It is such a waste. A picture book with fewer than 20 pages costs at least 30 yuan. I also found that original English books are hard to find in Beijing, or expensive to order from overseas online bookstores like Amazon.com."

Moreover, Zhao was preparing to take the test for a professional qualification license in China. That meant either purchasing piles of expensive reference books or commuting between home and the library every day.

"Even though libraries saved a lot of money, neither the public nor university ones have up-to-date textbooks," she said.

So far, Booksfly.com rents nearly 170,000 books. Its business is concentrated in Beijing. Rental procedures consist of four steps: submitting a book request, receiving the order within 24 hours, reading the book and returning it to the delivery agent who comes with your next order.

"They pick up and deliver books to my doorstep for free. There are no due dates or late fees, and it offers multiple membership plans. I began renting most of my teaching books from Booksfly.com last year," said Xu Jing, an assistant professor at Peking University.

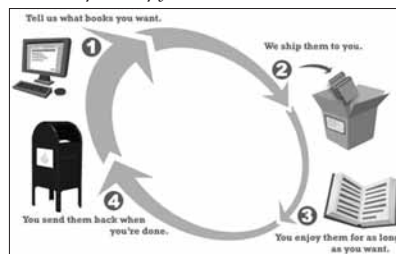
Membership plans range from a quarterly payment of 70 yuan to 980 yuan for an annual membership. The 70-yuan plan allows people to rent up to nine books over three months, while the latter allows the rental of up to eight books at once with no time limit.

With the latter membership, people can share books with another family to cut membership costs. Companies and classrooms can establish their own mini libraries under the plan.

Zhao said the ease of browsing may also encour-



Website of Booksfly.com



Four easy steps for renting a book: request, receive, read and return



age readers to venture into subjects that they may not have previously considered.

"A reader may only read books that relate to his or her work. However, if the reader can read more books at the click of a mouse, he may be willing to explore other areas, such as literature and philosophy," Zhao said.

Delivery is free to residents living inside the Fifth Ring Road. The website will expand to Shanghai and open an English version during the next several months.

"I think this is a great idea and will consider using the rental service," said Jing Yi, an employee at a German-invested company in Beijing. "I like to buy books, but also think that borrowing is great for those who do not want to spend large amounts of money or waste shelf space at home. Borrowing is also more environmentally friendly."

Jing said public libraries, like the National Library, and university libraries, like Peking University Library, should seriously consider opening similar services, since few readers have the time to sit and read in the library today.

Shrinking populations at traditional libraries are a worldwide phenomenon. In September, Amazon.com announced it was preparing a service to allow readers to rent electronic novels, biographies and other non-textbook titles. Its rental service would allow customers to pay an annual fee to have access to a library of e-books, *The Wall Street Journal* reported.

In July, the digital book giant launched a service called Kindle Textbook Rental that allows students to rent textbooks from the Kindle Store.

In China, besides Booksfly.com, Qingfange, Shuyue Book and Memean offer similar services. An increase in online book rental could put a dent in e-book and paper sales, further eroding publishers' current distribution and production models.



Readers can access Amazon's Kindle textbook rental service through a Kindle, an iPhone, an Android smartphone and a computer. The service itself is free, and with every purchase or rental people get a seven-day free trial of the textbook before purchasing or renting it for 180 days. Rented copies can be purchased or extended at any time, and the download is accessed via a NOOKStudy account.

## Hotel



### Shark fin banned at Peninsula Hotels

The Peninsula Hotels recognizes that sharks are increasingly threatened with extinction by unsustainable fishery practices. To support the conservation of marine bio-diversity and given the difficulty of identifying whether shark fin products came from non-threatened species, all Peninsula Hotels will stop serving shark fins and related products from January 2012.

The ban includes Chinese restaurants and banquet facilities at The Peninsula hotels in Hong Kong, Shanghai, Beijing, Tokyo, Bangkok and Chicago. Banquet bookings involving shark fin soup made prior to this date, but taking place after January 1, will be honored accordingly.

### Beijing Fire Bureau provides safety guides to Swissotel

The Beijing Fire Bureau is working hard to enhance hotel fire safety and help hotel staff and occupants know how to be prepared for a fire. The presentation and book awards ceremony was held with 300 participating hotel team members and managers.

Two books, *Beijing Fire Regulation* and *Beijing Fire General Knowledge Manual*, were

provided to the team members. These two books emphasize the importance of preventing fires and what to do when a fire occurs.

Additionally, the hotel recently added safety and security information to the guest room compendium to assist guests with safety information and tips on what to do in case of fire.

### Christmas tree ceremony at Grand Millennium Beijing

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas - especially at the Grand Millennium Beijing!

The new 8.5 meter Christmas tree and decorations were unveiled Friday, November 18. Hundreds of people, including ambassadors, under-privileged children from the "Beijing SOS Children's Village," Santa Claus and several of his helpers gathered in the lobby for a spectacular ceremony to get the Yuletide Season underway.

General Manager Gino Tan spoke before the light show, which was accompanied by Band Aid's song "Do They Know It's Christmas." Afterward, children from the International School of Beijing sang Christmas Carols for the crowd. The entertainment continued with an acoustic trio performance for the 400



guests who dined at a feast prepared by the hotel's culinary team.

Grand Millennium Beijing is a large international 5-star hotel located in the Central Business District just inside the East Third Ring Road. Bookings are being accepted for Christmas and year-end staff parties.

## Airline



### Low-fare route brings Australia, Singapore closer together

Two of the top destinations for Chinese travelers, Australia and Singapore, are now easier to visit thanks to low-fare leader Jetstar opening its first Melbourne-Beijing service via Singapore.

CEO of the Jetstar Group Bruce Buchanan said the new route would lower the cost for Chinese travelers headed for Singapore or Australia, and that all fares would be covered by the carrier's Price Beat Guarantee.

"Lower fares mean more people can fly more places more often, whether it's to visit friends and family or take a holiday that would otherwise be out of reach," Buchanan said. "Jetstar has carried hundreds of thousands of first time fliers across the Asia-Pacific region, many of whom depended on our low fares to make the trip."

Beijing represents the Jetstar Group's 10th destination in China. The carrier flies to almost 60 destinations across the Asia-Pacific region, where it is the largest low-cost carrier by revenue.

The CEO of Jetstar's Australia and New Zealand operations, David Hall, traveled to Beijing on the inaugural flight and said the new route was expected to have a parallel effect of increasing the number of Australian tourists to China.

### Beijing Landmark Towers adopts IdeaS industry-best pricing

IdeaS Revenue Solutions, the leading provider of pricing and revenue management software, services and consulting, announced a new partnership with Beijing Landmark Towers, which use the company's industry-leading pricing solutions to enhance occupancy and maximize revenue at the hotel.

Given the highly competitive hotel environment in China, Beijing Landmark Towers hopes to improve its approach to revenue management and adopt best practice pricing technology.

"The hotel industry in Beijing is constantly evolving. To stay ahead of the competition, we need to actively

find a way to innovate in management and ensure that we are using the most up to date technologies and methods. We recognize that to maximize revenue within our hotel we need to build a revenue culture across our property," said Chen Guoyao, general manager of Beijing Landmark Towers.

In working with IdeaS, Beijing Landmark Towers will adopt the IdeaS Revenue Management System (RMS) and a series of IdeaS Hospitality Consulting programs to make strategic decisions with a clear view of their competitors' positions and to determine correct pricing for their rooms and group bookings.

## Dinning

### Hong Kong hotpot buffet

If you haven't tasted Swissotel Beijing's Hong Kong hotpot, you're missing out. Happy Valley's Chinese hotpot ensemble will redefine what you think of hotpot. The famous Hong Kong hotpot is a family dining experience.

Where: Swissotel Beijing, 2 Chaoyangmen Bei Dajie, Chaoyang District

When: 6 - 10 pm

Cost: 198 yuan (15 percent gratuity)

Tel: 6553 2288 ext. 2146/2148

(By Jackie Zhang)







Fri, Dec. 2

**Nightlife**  
**Buyi Band**

Started in 1995 in Yinchuan, Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, Buyi blends traditional Chinese musical elements with rock. They play the guzheng, dizi and hulusi, a single pipe free-reed instrument found in Yunnan Province.

Where: Jiangjinjiu Bar, 2 Zhongku Hutong, Dongcheng District  
When: 9:30 pm  
Admission: 50 yuan

Tel: 8405 0124

**Nightlife**  
**Hedgehog**

Founded in 2005, this Beijing-based rock trio released its fourth album, *Honeyed and Killed*, in March on Modern Sky Records, depicting a dark musical world.

Where: Yugongyishan, 3-2 Zhangzizhong Lu, Dongcheng District  
When: 8:30 pm  
Admission: 60 yuan advance purchase, 80 yuan at the door  
Tel: 8402 8477

Sat, Dec. 3

**Nightlife**  
**Yangjima**

The Tibetan singer brings the relaxed, deep-throat humming of the Himalayas. Folk singer Song Yuzhe is the guest performer.

Where: Jianghu Bar, 7 Dongmianhua Hutong, Jiadaokou Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District  
When: 9 pm  
Admission: 40 yuan advance purchase, 50 yuan at the door  
Tel: 6401 5269

**Movie**  
**Dragon Boat (2010)**

This documentary records the story of Lianxi Village, a hamlet located on an island off the coast of Guangzhou, Guangdong Province. The documentary begins with the dragon boat burial that followed the 2001 Dragon Boat Festival.

Where: Broadway Cinematheque, 2/F Building 4, north section of Museum of Modern Art (MOMA), 1 Xiangheyuan Lu, Dongcheng District  
When: 7 pm  
Admission: Free  
Tel: 8438 8258 ext. 8001

**Drama**  
**Cooking a Dream**

Pioneer director Huang Ying adapts a legendary novel from the Tang Dynasty depicting the story of Lu, a young man eager for fortune and fame.

Where: Beijing Temple Theater (Zheng Yi Ci), 220 Xiheyuan Jie, Qianmen, Xicheng District  
When: 7:30 pm  
Admission: 80, 120 and 180 yuan for individual tickets, 880 yuan for a five-person box, 1,080 yuan for a six-person box and 3,000 yuan for a 12-person box  
Tel: 8315 1650

Mon, Dec. 5

**Exhibition**  
**World's Shadows – Zhang Dali Solo Exhibition**

This exhibition presents the works of Zhang Dali from the last three years. Zhang memorializes the temporary environment surrounding his studio in Beijing.

Where: Pekin Fin Arts, 241 Caochangdi Village, Chaoyang District  
When: Until December 4, daily except Monday, 10 am -- 6 pm  
Admission: Free  
Tel: 5127 3220



Tue, Dec. 6

**Exhibition**  
**For Tomorrow for Tonight**

This exhibition presents works by Thailand's film director Apichatpong Weerasethakul, who blends video, images and sound from three of his original films. For the artist, night – a time for sleep, darkness and quiet – is the natural space for dreams and desires. It is a time "when you cannot see and your mind takes over," Apichatpong said.

Where: Ullens Center for Contemporary Art (UCCA), 798 Art District, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District  
When: Until November 27, daily except Monday, 10 am – 6 pm  
Admission: 15 yuan, 10 yuan for students  
Tel: 8459 9269

Sun, Dec. 4



Wed, Dec. 7

**Drama****The Man Outside**

Written by German playwright Wolfgang Borchert in 1946, the play describes the hopelessness of a post-war soldier returning from Russia to find that he has lost his wife and his home.

Where: Capital Theater, 22 Wangfujing Dajie, Dongcheng District  
When: 7:30 pm  
Admission: 80-680 yuan, 40 yuan for students  
Tel: 6525 0996

Thu, Dec. 8

**Movie****Homerun (2003)**

Set in 1965, this Singapore film is about two poor children and their adventures over a lost pair of shoes.

Where: Club 3, 43 Bei Sanhuan Xi Lu, Haidian District  
When: 7:30 pm  
Admission: 15 yuan  
Tel: 8211 5288

(By He Jianwei)

